



September 1, 2005

CONTACT: Betsy Wehl
Wiener Associates
517.374.2703
betsywehl@wienerassociates.com

Census Bureau Reports 1,156,000 Uninsured Residents in Michigan; Many Could Find Help Through Partnership for Prescription Assistance of Michigan

*Groundbreaking Partnership Connects Uninsured With Programs That Can Provide
Free or Nearly Free Prescription Medicines*

Washington, D.C. – The number of Americans without health insurance in 2004 increased by 800,000 to 45.8 million from 45 million in 2003, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In Michigan, more than 1,156,000 residents are uninsured – an increase of seven percent. The good news is that help is available for many of these Americans through a groundbreaking partnership that can connect individuals in need with programs that may provide free or nearly free prescription medicines. The Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA) has helped nearly 800,000 Americans across the country, more than 22,000 in Michigan, in less than four months. Millions more stand to benefit.

“The pharmaceutical industry understands that without health insurance many patients do not have access to their prescription medicines,” said Billy Tauzin, president and CEO of the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). “That is why we have made a commitment to helping those in need through the Partnership for Prescription Assistance. This program is only one piece of the puzzle, but we continue to aggressively reach out to those who lack insurance to connect them to the patient assistant programs that meet their needs. ”

The PPA launched its services in April, and Michigan’s chapter launched in May. The PPA provides a single point of access to more than 475 patient assistance programs through a toll-free number and user-friendly Web site. To start the process of finding out if they may qualify for private or public assistance programs, including the new Medicare prescription drug benefit, patients can visit a user-friendly Web site or call toll free to speak with a trained specialist who will provide information or guide them through the application process in English, Spanish and approximately 150 other languages.

More than 20 local organizations, including the American Cancer Society – Great Lakes Division, the Epilepsy Foundation of Michigan and the Mental Health Association in Michigan, as well as a fast-growing list of state and national organizations across the country, are working with America’s pharmaceutical companies to spread the word about the program.

To find out if they may qualify, patients should call toll-free **1-888-4PPA-NOW** (1-888-477-2669) to speak with a trained specialist or visit **www.pparxmi.org**.

###